



NIRI ATLANTA

NATIONAL INVESTOR RELATIONS INSTITUTE
ATLANTA CHAPTER
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By now, most of us are in full swing for your Third Quarter Earnings Release! Today, investors don't always respond rationally to even a good message because they are more often focused on macro events which may impact their "alpha" returns. For most of us, investor messaging has become a real challenge in today's market. Given the way markets have been trading recently, it is very difficult to understand how effectively the message is being delivered to and received by the investor community. On any given day, your stock can be up or down not because of economic or business conditions BUT because some trader needs to rebalance his risk profile and "your stock" is the vehicle he uses to accomplish that objective. Try explaining that to your CEO or CFO!

Your Atlanta NIRI organization can help. Communications is as much an art as it is a science. Although the science is evolving, e.g. video, social networking, webcasting, etc., there are many resources we can readily access to help us on that front. However, the art of communication is a more challenging dimension. Many of us have developed our own style ("the art") of communicating after years of experience. Some of those experiences are still relevant today while others are not. The best way to enhance the art of communication is to build in the experiences of others that are most applicable to the environment of today and your particular situation. In Atlanta we have a diverse mix of companies, each with their own IR professionals and experiences. You can benefit from that by joining us at our meetings, participating in our events, visiting our website OR picking up the phone and calling one of our members directly. I have yet to encounter an individual in our community that is unwilling to help.

As you look at our program for the year and the other resources we make available, consider what you can do to help those who help you. We are in a profession where change is probably more pervasive and volatile than most other professions. And, there are no clear black-and-white answers to our questions. The initiatives the Atlanta NIRI organization has undertaken and the programs for this year are all designed to help you become better IR professionals.

New in 2011: Revamped & Improved Sponsorship Program

Sponsors are a very integral to the success of Atlanta NIRI. Last year, they were instrumental in helping us elevate our annual Golf Outing to include a Live/Silent Auction and significantly increase our contribution to Junior Achievement. This year, we enhanced the program by giving our sponsors a wide range of options to best fit their budgets and marketing objectives. Martin Jarosick has designed an outstanding program that has been well received by many of our sponsors.

The new sponsorship program simplifies the process, in addition to providing a high level of exposure and return for their investment. Sponsorships have been grouped into three categories: the Fall Conference, the October-to-May monthly meetings, and the Golf Tournament and Silent Auction. For the Fall Conference and monthly meetings, we have 2 sponsorship levels: Gold and Silver. For the Golf Tournament and Auction we add a Bronze level as well as a multitude of unique opportunities such as hole-in-one, longest drive, and beverage cart sponsorships.

With this approach, we now provide our sponsors a full menu of opportunities for the entire year so they can select the level that best fits with their objectives and budget. This also allows the sponsor to take one comprehensive sponsorship package through their internal approval process at the proper time in their budgeting cycle. And, we offer a discount for sponsors who sign up for all three opportunities as a way to reward them for their extraordinary commitment to our organization.

What can you do to support our sponsorship program? The best way is to recognize the commitment our sponsors have made to NIRI Atlanta. Make a point to thank them during a monthly program meeting. Accept an invitation to play in their foursome in the golf tournament. Take a meeting when they come through town. If you happen to use their services, mention that their support of NIRI Atlanta is an important sign of their commitment to you and the organization.

Our upcoming calendar for the remainder of 2011 is very active. Here is a quick recap ...

Later this month, we will give you the opportunity to broaden your insights with a look at Global Marketing. In terms of investible assets, Europe is second to North America. Probably more important is its heavier concentration of “long term” investors vs. hedge funds. My experience while marketing in London is that the investor base is much more focused on the long term fundamentals of their investments. So, while marketing globally may be more expensive, consider the benefits of a more stable, fundamentally driven investor base. Those benefits, in the long run, can easily overwhelm the actual cost of an ongoing marketing campaign. Sid Jones has put together an excellent program to provide both insights and experiences that you can use in your planning process. He’s also been known to do a bit of global marketing himself and can give you some great insights on how to sell your management team on the benefits.

In November, we will be discussing dark pools. Do you know what percent of your trading volume occurs in dark pools? What is a dark pool? How does it impact your stock price? Should you even care about dark pool activity? Dark pools are growing in popularity which adds to the challenge of understanding and interpreting trends in your stock price. Furthermore, investors can accumulate a very large position in your stock very quickly with limited ability for you to anticipate or track until after-the-fact. Our panel of experts will provide important insights and share valuable information on this emerging trend and its future.

Our annual Christmas party is scheduled for Thursday, December 8th, so make sure and mark your calendars. This year’s event will be something special as our very own Bill McCarthy and his band will be performing. Many of our sponsors will be there and it will be a great time to just kick back, relax, and have some fun.

Also be on the lookout for our membership survey. NIRI Atlanta wants to ensure we continue to deliver programs, resources and events that best meet the needs of our membership. Later in October, we will be conducting a survey to get your direct and candid feedback on all of these. Your feedback will enable us to tailor the Atlanta NIRI organization to be a more supportive and valuable resource.

Our annual Golf Tournament & Live/Silent Auction will be held on Thursday, May 10, 2012 at the Heritage Golf Course. We had an amazing time there this year and are planning for an even better event next year. Anyone wishing to help should contact Sid Jones. It’s a great opportunity for us to support Junior Achievement while networking with friends, colleagues and sponsors.

Shortly, we will be announcing a LinkedIn Group for Atlanta NIRI members. Realizing that we are all very busy and the timing of the monthly meetings is not always convenient, the Board felt that LinkedIn would give us an opportunity to stay in touch 24x7 if you will. Through LinkedIn, we hope to enhance our networking with more real time dialogue. For that one question you thought of after the meeting, for the question that cannot wait for the next meeting, when you need some quick insights but do not know who to ask, LinkedIn is your tool. Take advantage of the years of experience that exists within our membership and use LinkedIn as a resource. We will be limiting membership in the group to only those who are Atlanta NIRI members. As a result, you shouldn't be invited to participate in promotional or self-serving discussions. Be on the lookout for your invitation to join the Atlanta NIRI LinkedIn Group.

We would also like your help in building a library of content for on our website. Many times, we have an urgent need to get some basic information and can't find it quickly. We would like the Atlanta NIRI website to be a resource that you can come to when you have those needs. If you have any white papers or generic analysis that you feel would be useful to others, please send it to Lisa Beckham. We will be sure to get the appropriate approvals before publishing it on our website.

Hope to see you all at our next meeting on October 21, 7:30 AM at Maggiano's.